



Sample Design for Internet Panel Surveys

Methodological Seminar

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Background

- Social Science Research Institute, University of Iceland
 - Academic research institute under the auspices of three faculties of the University of Iceland, Faculty of Social and Human Sciences, Faculty of Social Work, and Faculty of Political Science
 - 30 year experience of survey research practices
 - Recruitment of the SSRI online panel started in 2010
 - SSRI online panel is a probabilistic internet panel of 7,000 individuals





Objective of visit

- Evaluation of possibilities of creating a high quality probabilistic online panel in Lithuania, looking at:
 - General survey practices in Lithuania
 - Internet penetration and usage
 - Available sampling frames
 - Likelihood of compliance
 - The most feasible approach





What is a probabilistic online panel?

According to ISO 26362 - Access Panels in Market, Opinion, and Social Research, an online panel is defined as:

“A sample database of potential respondents who declare that they will cooperate with future [online] data collection if selected” (International Organization for Standardization 2009).





Why create online panels?

- Declining response rates in general population surveys
- Increasing costs of face to face surveys
- Problems with telephone surveys – increased costs and declining response rates
 - Caller ID
 - Landlines replaced with mobiles, leading to increased costs

Is ICT – Information communication technology the solution?





Main obstacles to general population web surveys

- Coverage problems due to:
 - Internet penetration
 - Internet usage
- Lack of a population frame



Probabilistic online panels





Challenges in building a new national online panel

1. Obtaining and contacting a representative sample to invite
 - List of individuals
 - List of addresses
 - Random route methodology
2. Providing access to potential participants
 - Provide internet access
 - Mixed mode data collection
3. Motivation of potential participants
 - Persuasive communication
 - Incentives / lotteries





European probability based panels

- LISS Longitudinal Internet Studies for the Social Sciences in the Netherlands <http://www.lissdata.nl/lissdata/>
- GIP German Internet Panel in Germany http://reforms.uni-mannheim.de/internet_panel/home/
- Gesis Panel Omnibus panel for the social sciences in Germany <http://www.gesis.org/en/services/data-collection/gesis-panel/general-overview/>
- ELIPSS Etude longitudinale par internet pour les science sociales in France <https://www.elipss.fr/elipss/recruitment/>
- SSRI panel Social Science Research Institute Online Panel in Iceland http://fel.hi.is/online_panel





Recruitment and maintenance of online panels

Sample selection	Incomplete sampling frames	Register of individuals: random selection of indiv. Address register: random selection of households/ Random route tech.: Selection via last birthday
Recruitment/fieldwork First contact Interview Compliance Recruitment Interview	Non-contact Interview Rejection Panel Rejection	Advance letters, contact cards, visits, phone calls, experienced interviewers. Incentives and tablets or possibly choice of mode (online or offline).
Registration Survey	Non-response (unit-/item non-response)	Invitation, prepaid monetary incentives by mail, if used; reminder strategy, mixed-mode or unimode
Surveys	Non-response (unit-/item non-response) Attrition	Monetary incentives/lotteries per wave; Reminder strategy, Mode-switch option (offline- online) Helpdesk / panel portal

Development

Problems

Measures and procedures





An example from Iceland

SSRI ONLINE PANEL



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Recruitment

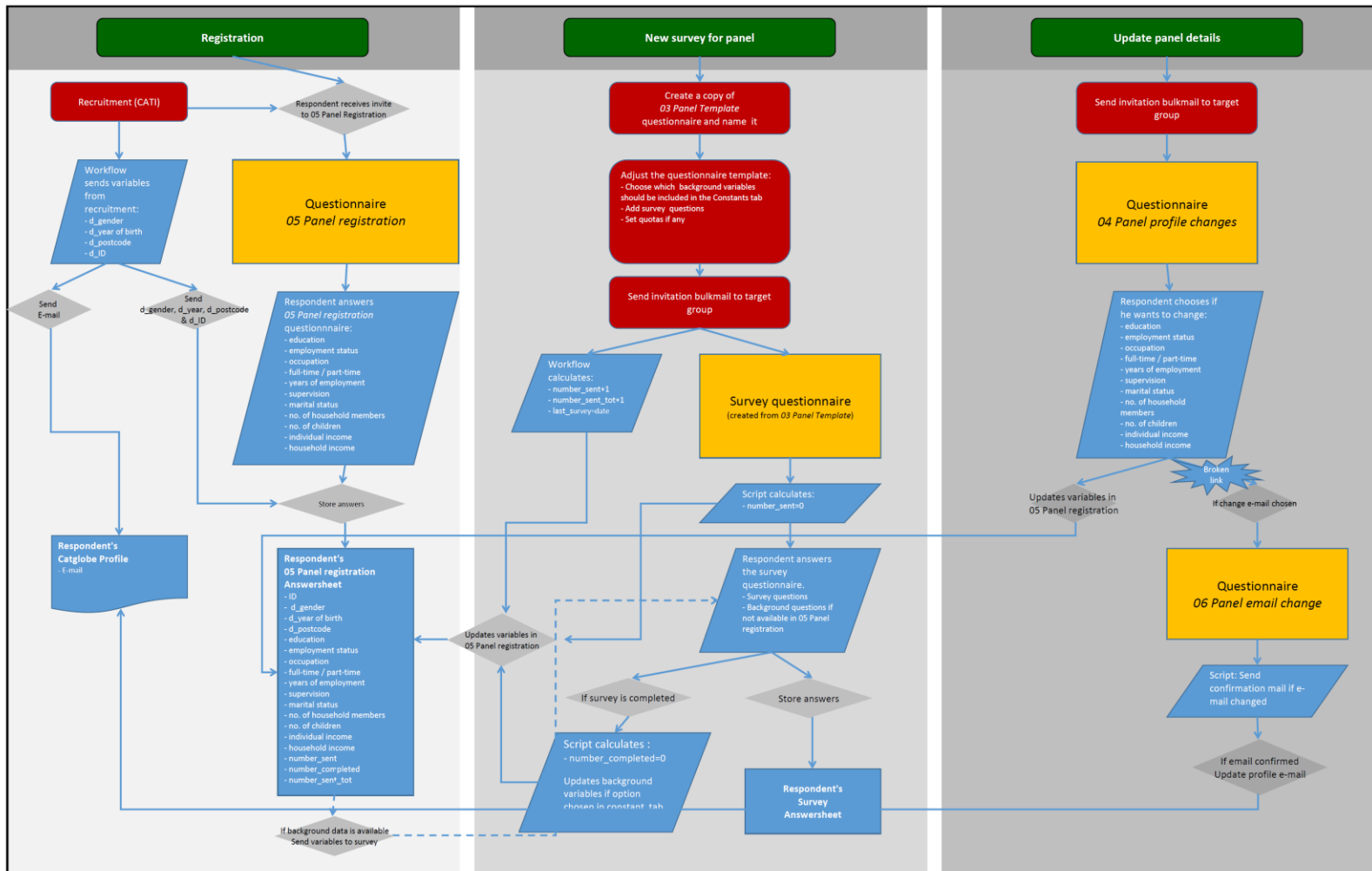
SSRI online panel

- The SSRI has not received any special funding for building the online panel
- Samples are drawn from the National Register (simple random samples)
- Recruitment has been done through many different telephone surveys with random samples of the general population – where the interviews have concluded with an invitation/request to take part in the panel.
- Over the last five years 24,133 individuals 18 years and older have been invited to take part. 13,114 have accepted, or 54.3%.
- Today the panel includes around 7,000 active panelists





Panel Workflow





Composition biases - access SSRI online panel

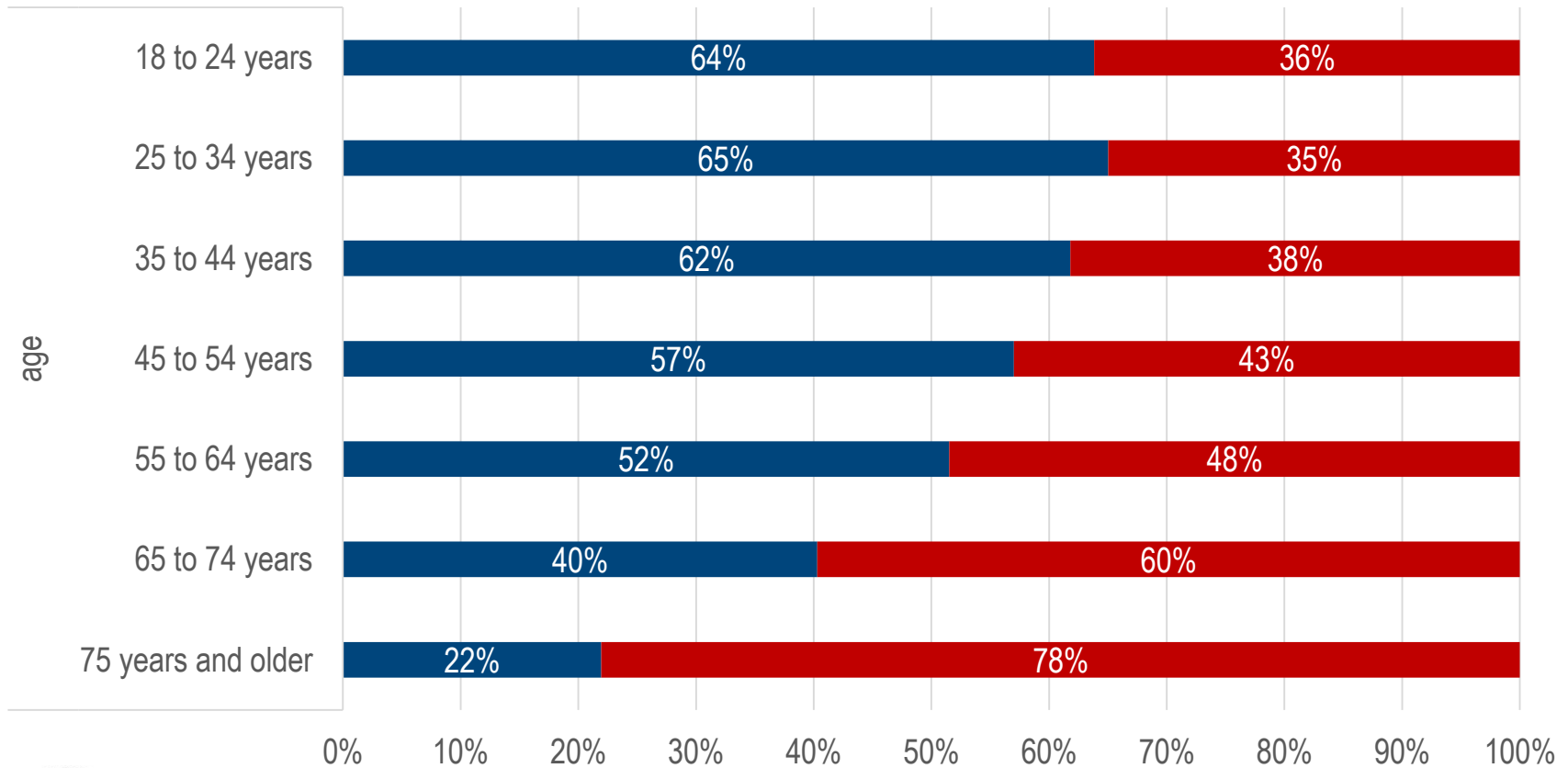
- 96.6% of those contacted claimed to have internet access
 - Average age of those who did not have access was 72 years (3.4%)
 - Average age of those who did have access was 49 years (96.6%)





Composition biases – acceptance of agegroups SSRI online panel

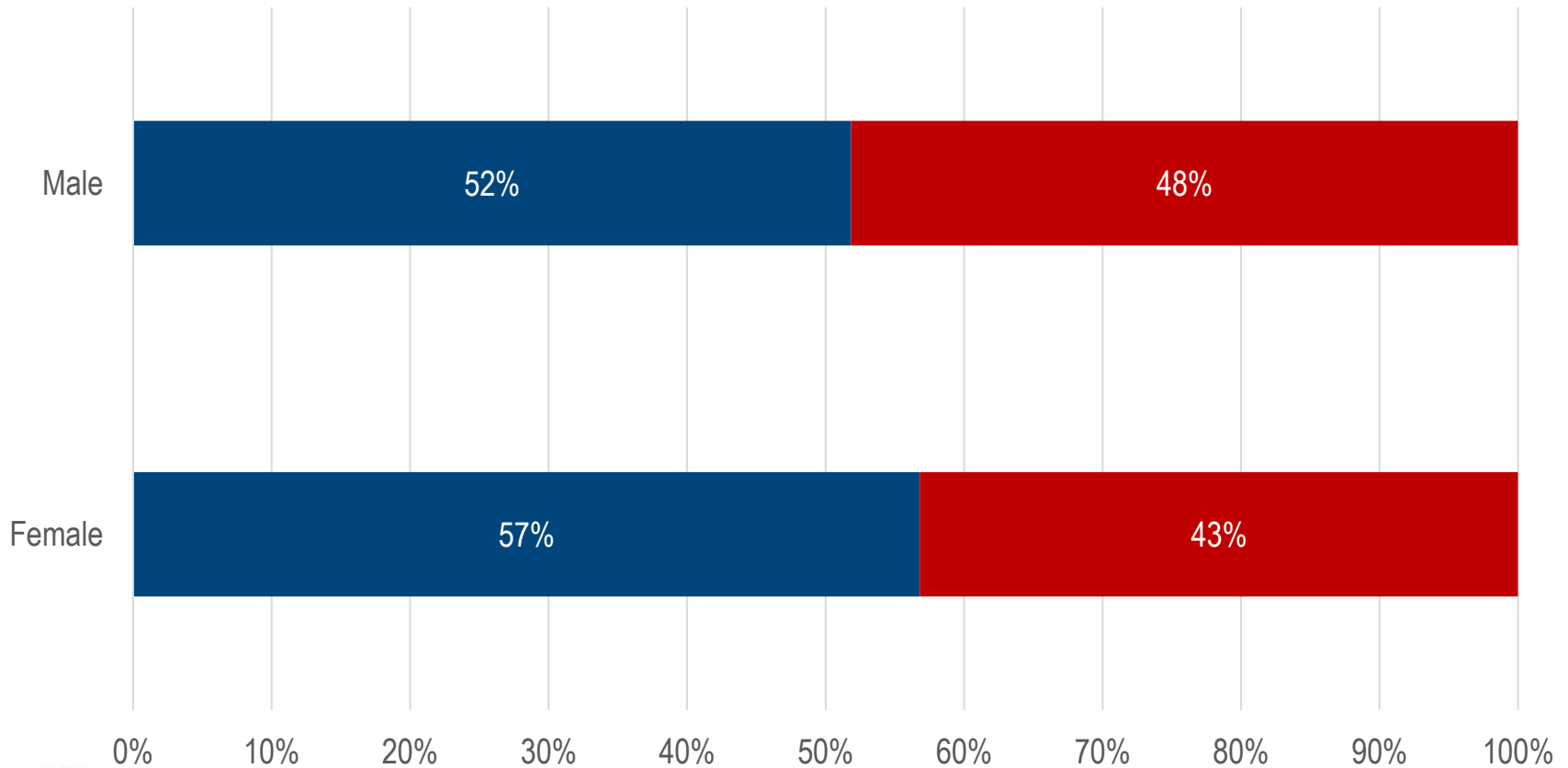
■ Yes ■ No





Composition biases – gender and acceptance SSRI online panel

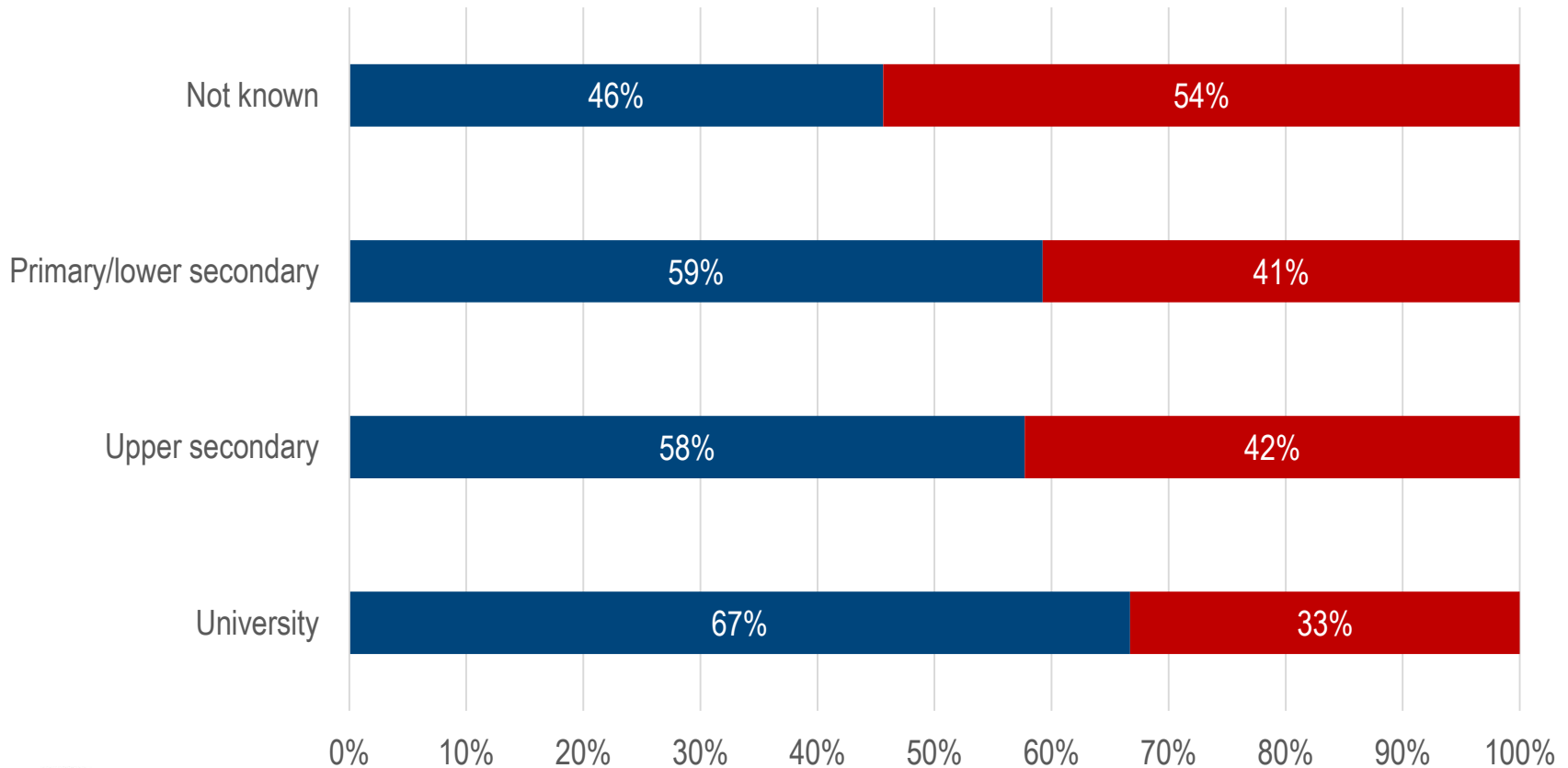
■ Yes ■ No





Composition biases – educational level and acceptance - SSRI online panel

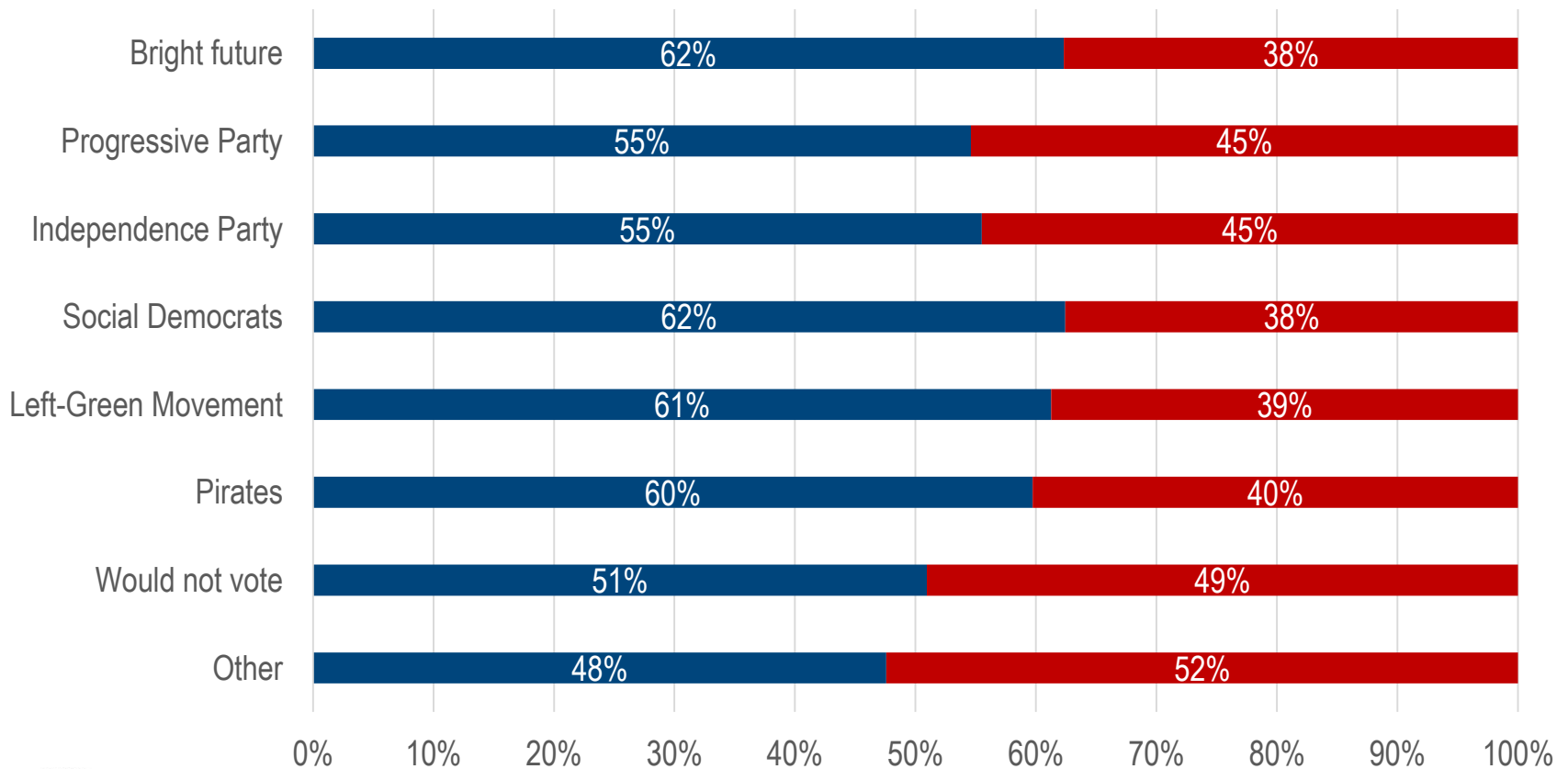
■ Yes ■ No





Composition biases – political orientation and acceptance - SSRI online panel

■ Yes ■ No





Surveys

SSRI online panel

- Random stratified samples drawn from panel
- Researchers pay for data collection (and analysis if that's required)
- Omnibus surveys are sent out approximately every other month
- Ad hoc surveys when requested





Mode experiments SSRI Online Panel

PARALLEL TELEPHONE AND ONLINE SURVEYS



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Methodology – Parallel Surveys

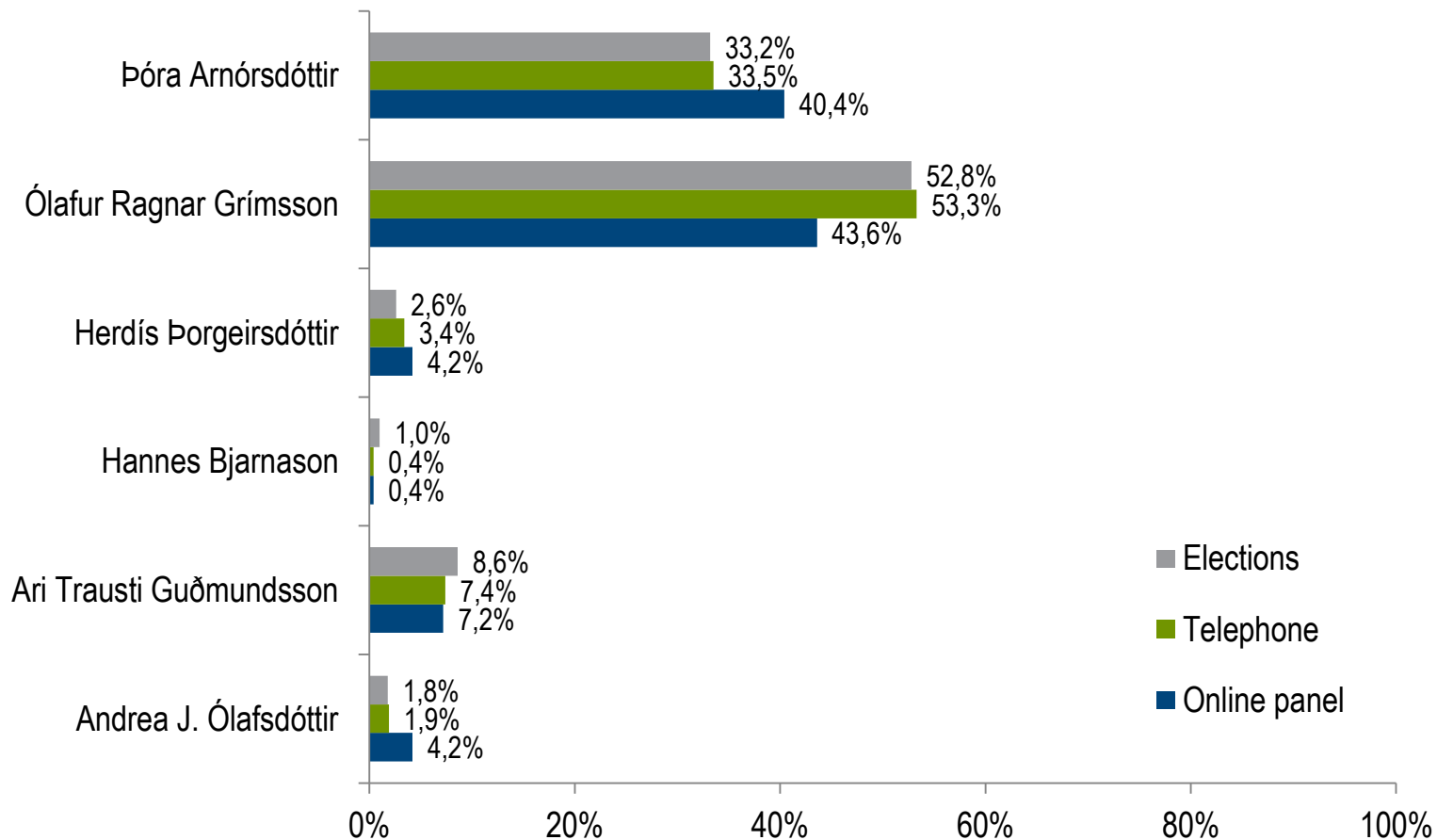
Presidential elections 2012

- Telephone survey
- Sample:
 - SRS from National Register
 - Size: 966
- Response rate – 57%
- Data collection
 - June 9th-18th 2012
 - CATI omnibus
- Weighting
 - Sex, age, area of residence and education
- Online survey
- Sample:
 - Stratified (by gender, age and area of residence) random sample from panel (recruited by phone)
 - Size: 969
- Response rate – 59%
- Data collection
 - June 9th-19th 2012
 - Online – 2 reminders
- Weighting
 - Sex, age, area of residence and education





Parallel surveys and election results

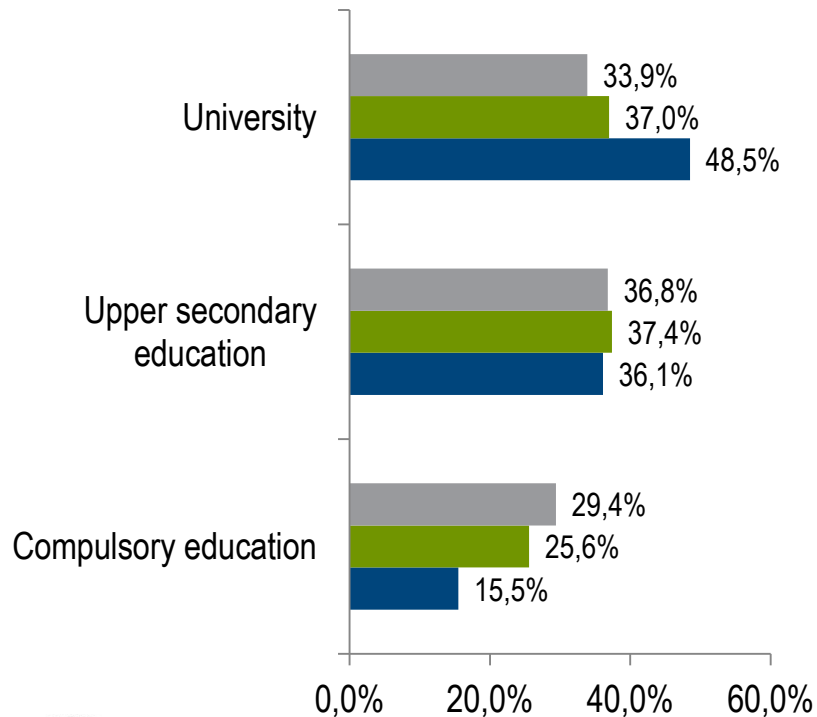




Background comparison (unweighted samples)

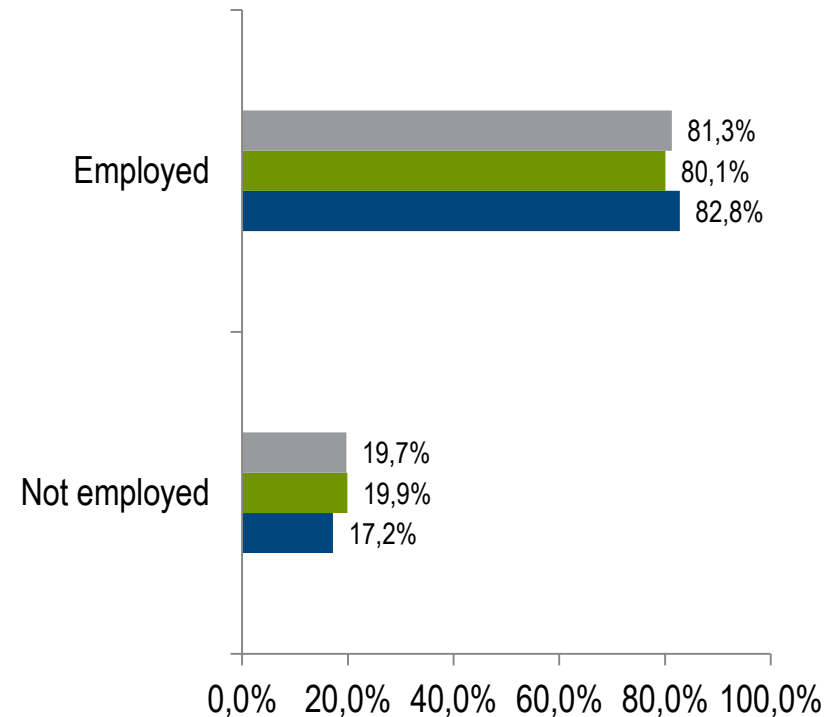
Education (*)

■ Statistics Iceland ■ Telephone ■ Online panel



Employment status (ns.)

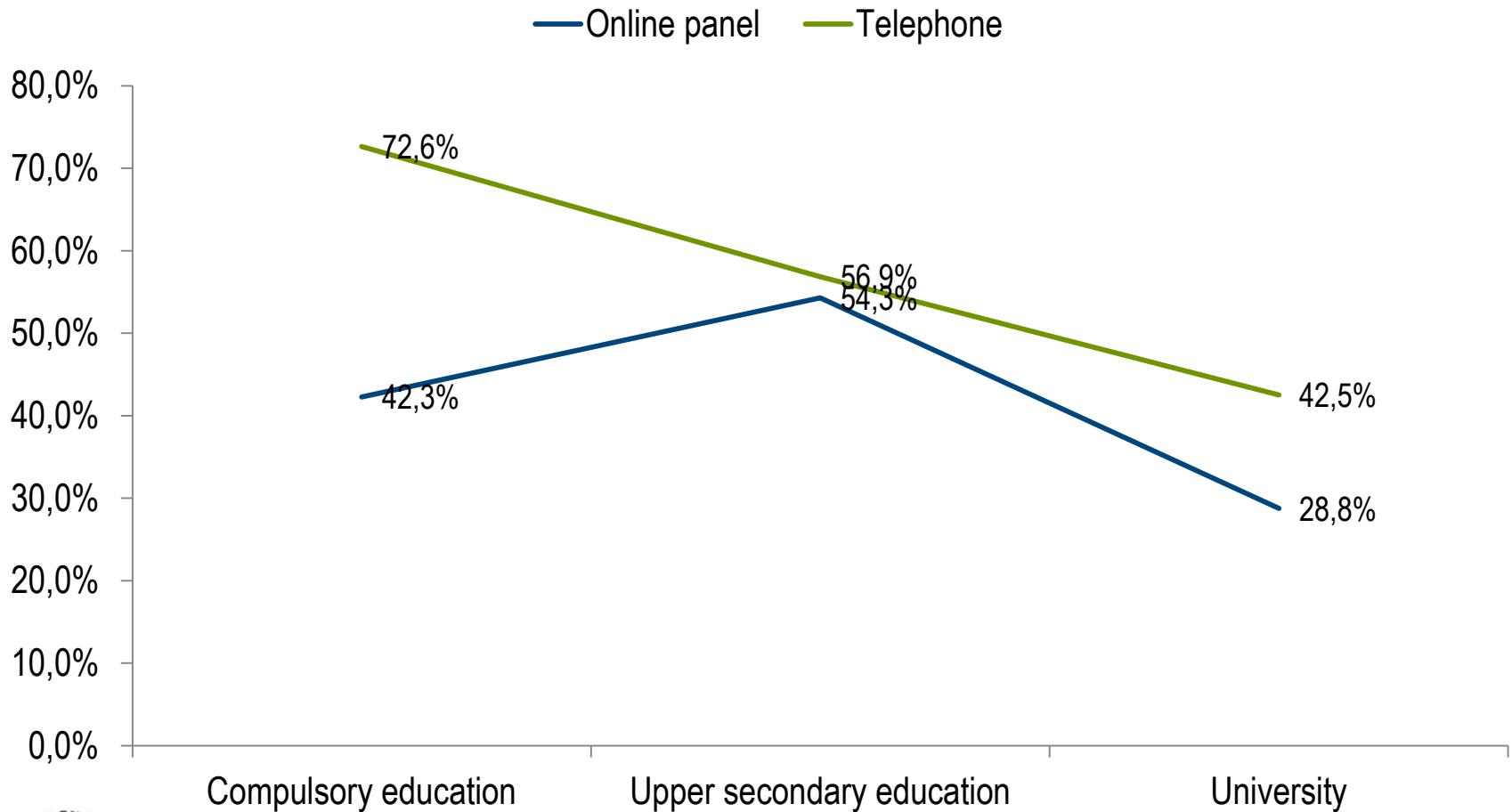
■ Statistics Iceland ■ Telephone ■ Online panel





Interaction between education and mode

Percentage voting for incumbent president (weighted results)



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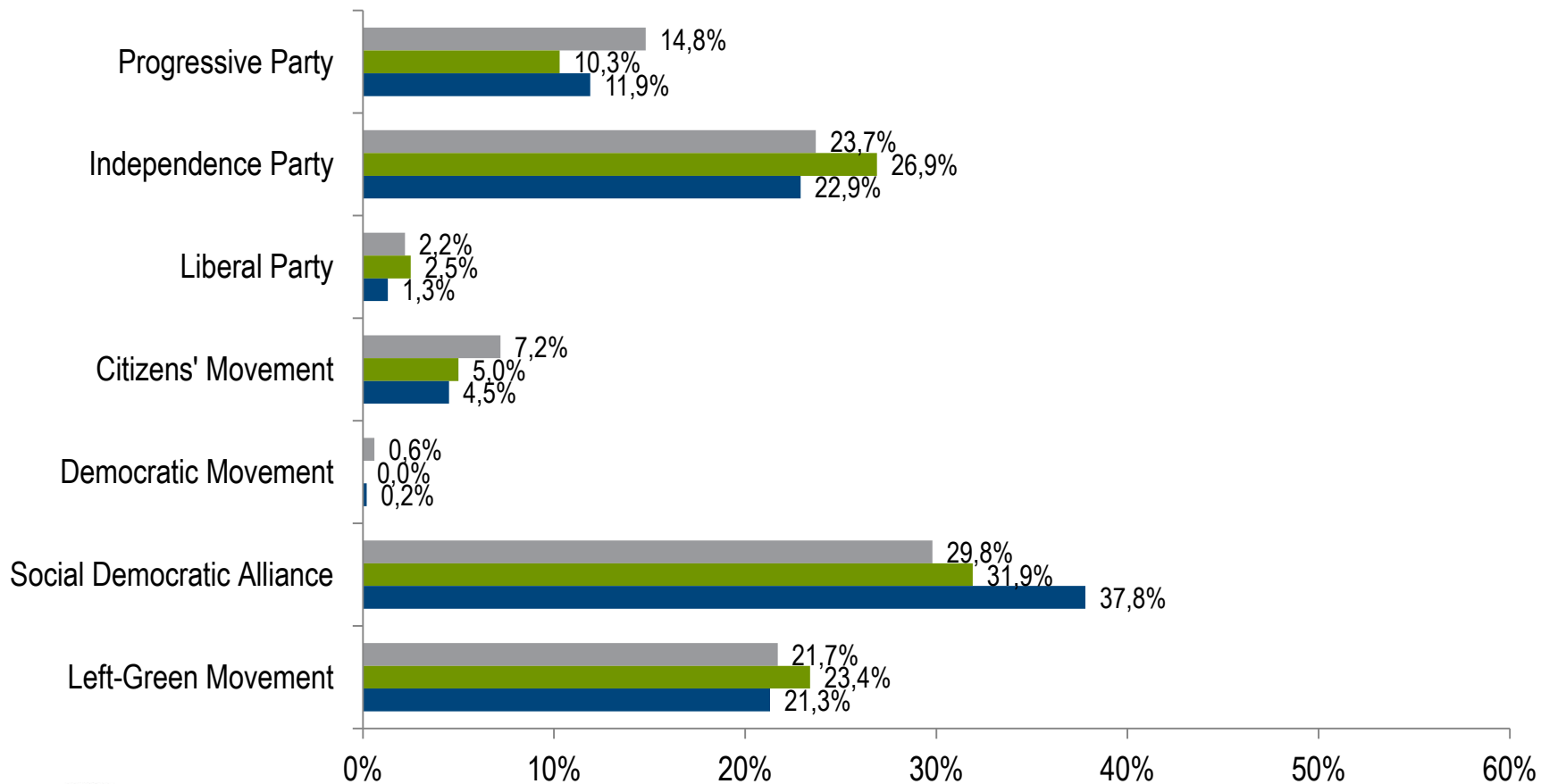
Likelihood Ratio $X^2=9.107$; $df=2$; $p=.011$



Political orientation

How did you vote in the general election in 2009

■ Elections 2009 ■ Telephone ■ Online panel





Methodology – Parallel Surveys

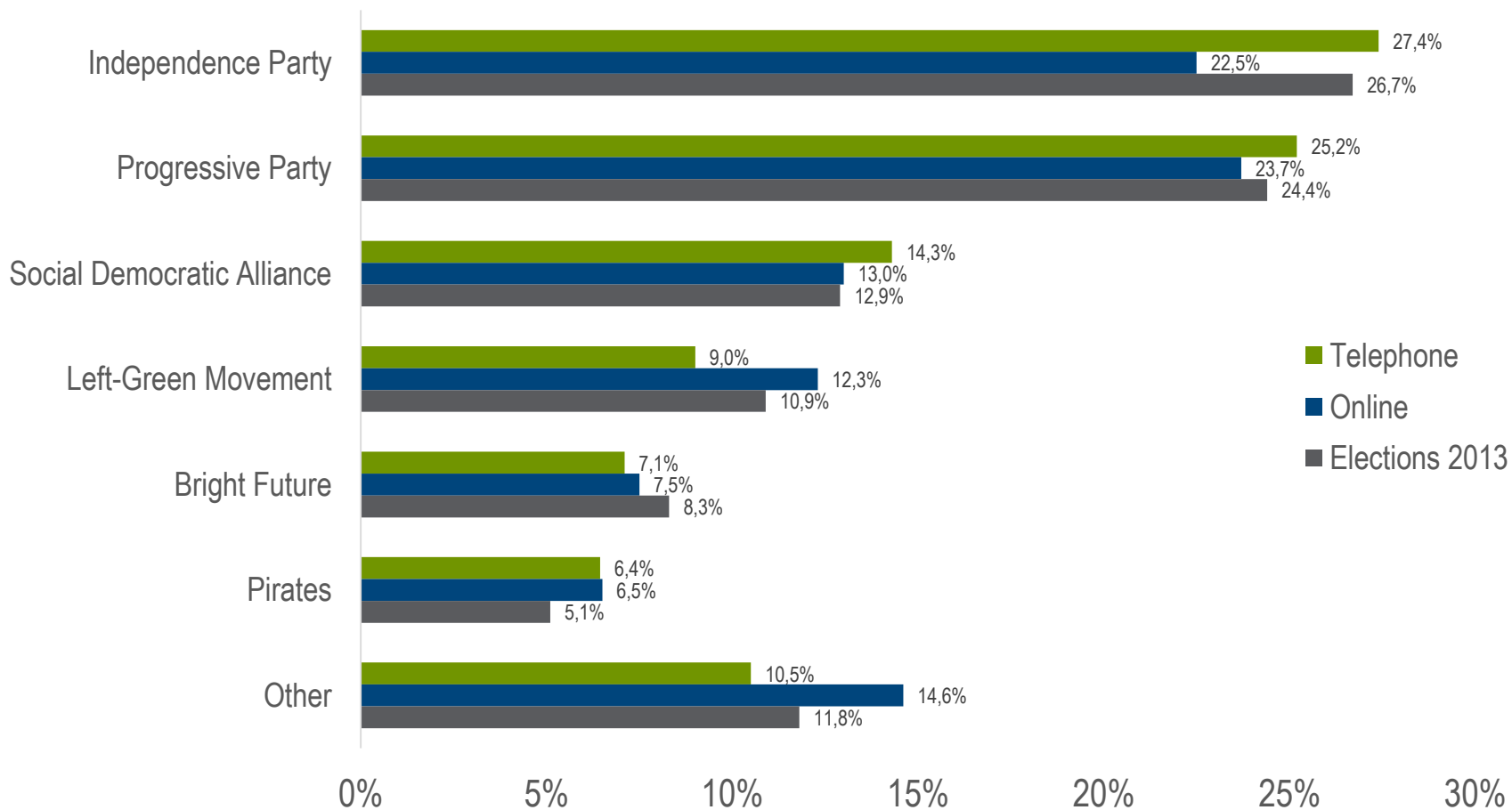
General elections 2013

- Telephone survey
- Sample:
 - SRS from National Register
 - Size: 1,850
- Response rate – 60%
- Data collection
 - April 18th-23rd 2013
 - CATI
- Weighting
 - Sex, age, area of residence and education
- Online survey
- Sample:
 - Stratified (by gender, age and area of residence) random sample from panel (recruited by phone)
 - Size: 2,000
- Response rate – 64%
- Data collection
 - April 17th-23rd 2013
 - Online – 3 reminders
- Weighting
 - Sex, age, area of residence and education





Parallel Surveys - General elections 2013





Reflections about composition biases

- Overrepresentation of university educated people in surveys in general, but especially in online panels in Iceland
- A political bias in the online panel – towards the left
- Can or should weighting be used to correct for political bias?





Online probabilistic panel in Lithuania?

COMPARISON BETWEEN ICELAND AND LITHUANIA



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Population and Internet Penetration



Population: 333,135
Area: 103,010 km²
Internet penetration: 96.5%

Register of named individuals



Population: 3,008,287
Area: 65,300 km²
Internet penetration: 68.5%

Register of addresses?

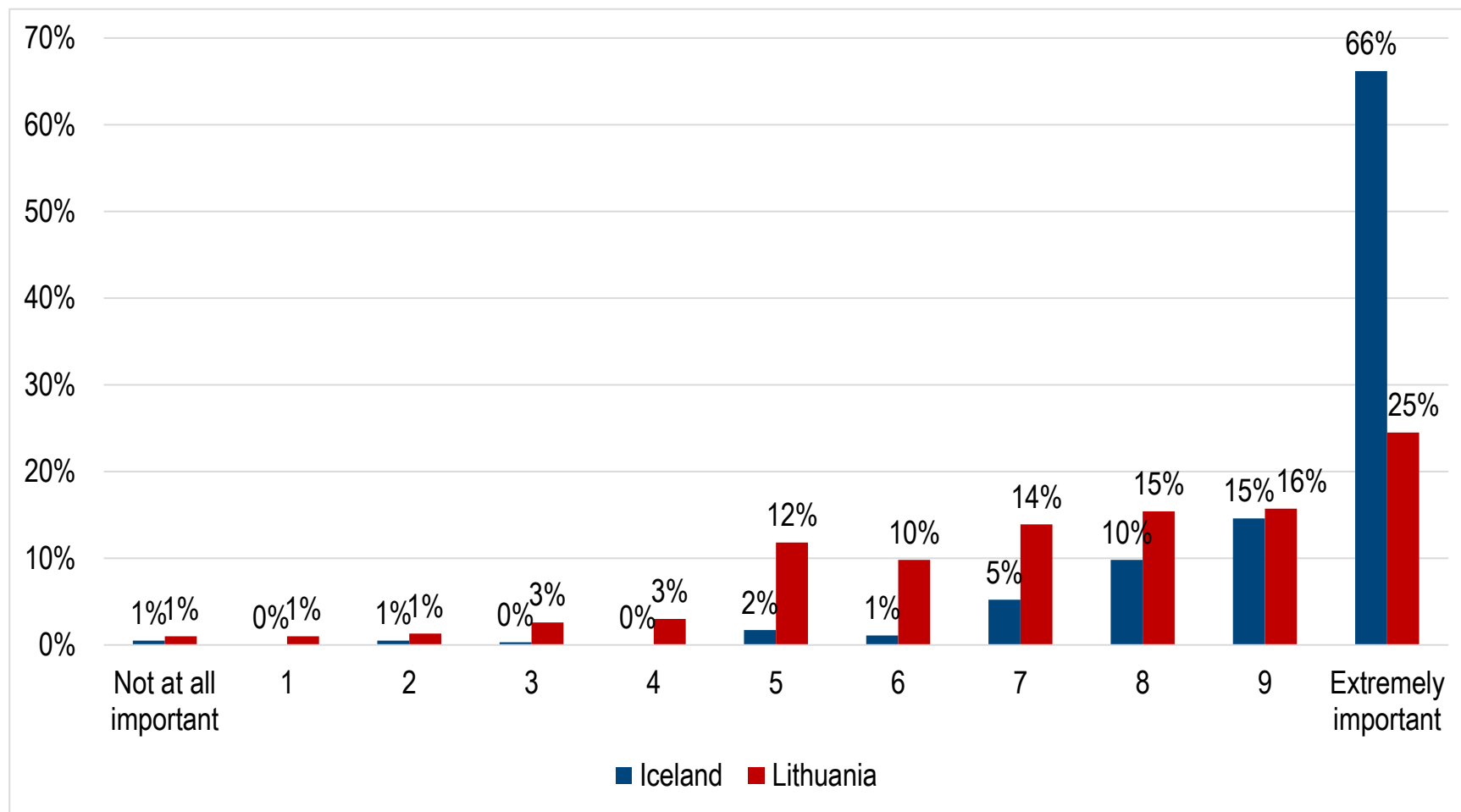


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<http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/population-by-country/>
<http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>



Importance of democracy according to ESS 2012

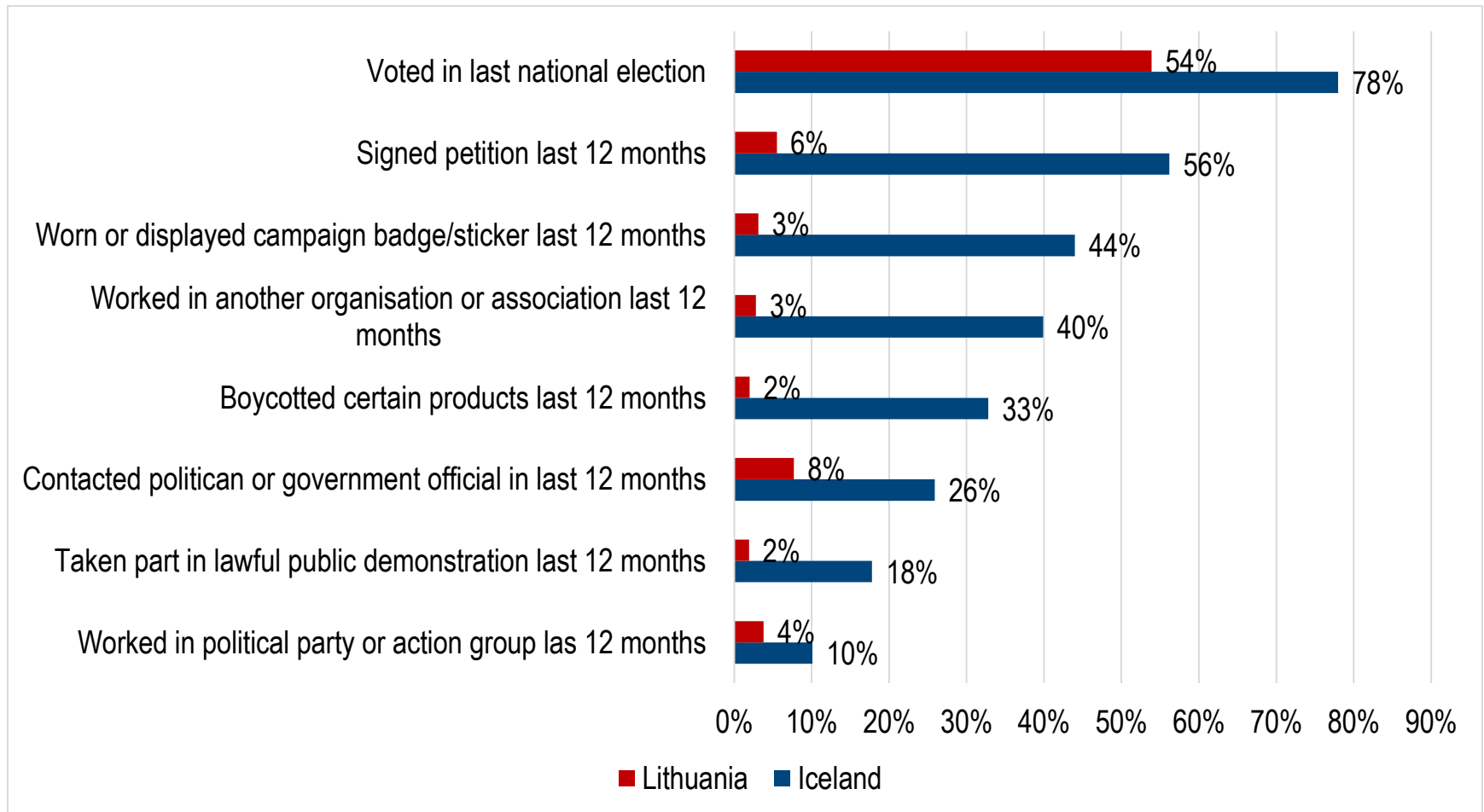


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How important is it for you to live in democratically governed country?



Democratic participation according to ESS 2012





Recommendations / ideas

- Start with a pilot study
 - Choose software
 - Choose sampling frame – register of addresses
 - Strong emphasis on introducing the project and its purpose
 - Introduce incentives
 - Test for mode effects
- Possibly invite those who take part in the next waves of ISSP and ESS to take part in an online panel / mixed mode panel
- Key is to have manpower to manage the panel and efficient software

